

Composting Toilet for Ascott Allotments

Clive and Debbie went to visit Cleveley Crescent where a new composting toilet was in the process of being erected – our contact was Patrick Williams from Ealing Allotments Partnership who has been involved in the supply/erection of the composting toilets purchased via EAP.

What a unit consists of

- Made from Wood plastic composite
- 2 toilet bowls (holes in a bench system) with lids
- Separate urinal for men
- Solar panel on roof
- Small hand basin
- Light

Costs etc

- The supplier of composting toilets purchased via EAP is Dunster House (there is another supplier but they are quite a lot more expensive).
- The cost for a unit is approx £850.00 – order through the Council to avoid paying VAT
- Overall cost including base, water container & battery (see below) approx. £1300.00
- Funding via EAP is only available for very small sites with little money however it might be possible to approach the Ward Forum for funding (not sure whether we can approach them more than once?)
- We would need to build a base – from EAP experience concrete is preferable.
- Battery - a battery is needed to store energy from the solar panel to power light and water pump (Joseph Mangar, Site Manager for Whitton Place and Horsenden and Chair of EAP has a source of batteries)
- Water container - we would need to purchase a water container for the hand basin (Joseph Mangar is buying a stock of water containers for the toilets purchased via EAP and could be approached to include us in the deal)
- We would need to supply sawdust for composting solid waste – nothing “special” needed (again, Joseph Mangar apparently has a source of free sawdust and Patrick thinks he may be prepared to help us out)
- The unit takes approx 1 day to erect (Patrick Williams is happy to come and advise because he has done this several times and can identify all the component parts)

How it works

- Women – urine is separated from solid waste and goes into a soakaway
- Men – have a separate urinal which goes into the soakaway
- Solid waste – goes down into the tank followed by a scoop or two of peat or sawdust which starts composting process and eliminates odours
- The units purchased via EAP contain 2 “toilet bowls” above sealed tanks – suggestion is to use only one side for 6 months and then close it and leave waste to compost for 6 months. Composted waste can then be used on flower beds
- Water for hand basin is pumped using power from solar panel/battery

Ongoing maintenance

- No chemicals must be used on solid, composting waste or it will stop the composting process
- Water tank for hand basin needs occasional refilling depending on size (water would need to be brought onsite during winter months or mains water would need to be turned on briefly in order to refill) so someone would need to monitor
- Supply of sawdust needs to be maintained
- After 6 months seal off one side in order for waste to compost, allow solid waste to compost for 6 months and then empty tank onto flower beds (apparently not an unpleasant task)
- Relies on individual users to ensure it is kept clean